

1 WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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3 1. A method for reducing the damaging effect of a hypochlorite salt-containing  
4 solution on a soft fabric article, comprising the steps of:

5 (a) modifying the solution by adding an alkali metal hydroxide to the  
6 solution, such that the weight concentration ratio of the alkali metal hydroxide over the  
7 hypochlorite salt in the modified solution is no less than 1:12.5; and

8 (b) contacting the modified solution with a stain on the soft fabric article for  
9 at least one minute to remove the stain.

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11 2. The method according to claim 1, wherein the alkali metal hydroxide is sodium  
12 hydroxide, and the hypochlorite salt is sodium hypochlorite.

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14 3. The method according to claim 2, wherein the weight concentration ratio of  
15 sodium hydroxide over sodium hypochlorite in the modified solution is no less than 1:10.

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17 4. The method according to claim 2, wherein the weight concentration ratio of  
18 sodium hydroxide over sodium hypochlorite in the modified solution is no less than 1:5.

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20 5. The method according to claim 2, wherein the weight concentration ratio of  
21 sodium hydroxide over sodium hypochlorite in the modified solution is no less than 1:2.5.

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23 6. The method according to claim 2, wherein the weight concentration ratio of  
24 sodium hydroxide over sodium hypochlorite in the modified solution is no less than 1:1.

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26 7. The method according to claim 2, wherein the modified solution includes at least  
27 0.2 weight percent of sodium hydroxide.

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29 8. The method according to claim 2, wherein the modified solution includes at least  
30 0.3 weight percent of sodium hydroxide.

1           9. The method according to claim 2, wherein the modified solution includes from  
2    about 0.5 to about 3 weight percent of sodium hydroxide.

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4           10. The method according to claim 1, comprising the step of contacting the modified  
5    solution with the stain on the soft fabric article for at least five minutes to remove the stain.

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7           11. The method according to claim 1, comprising the step of contacting the modified  
8    solution with the stain on the soft fabric article for at least fifteen minutes to remove the stain.

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10          12. The method according to claim 1, wherein the stain is a menstrual fluid stain or  
11    an underarm perspiration stain.

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13          13. The method according to claim 1, wherein the soft fabric article comprises  
14    cotton.

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16          14. A method for reducing the damaging effect of a hypochlorite salt-containing  
17    solution on a soft fabric article, comprising the steps of:

18               (a) modifying the solution by adding an alkali metal hydroxide to the  
19    solution, such that the pH of the modified solution is at least 11.8; and

20               (b) contacting the modified solution with a stain on the soft fabric article for  
21    at least one minute to remove the stain.

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23          15. The method according to claim 14, wherein the pH of the modified solution is at  
24    least 12.

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26          16. The method according to claim 14, wherein the pH of the modified solution is at  
27    least 12.5.

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29          17. The method according to claim 14, wherein the pH of the modified solution is  
30    about 13.

1           18. The method according to claim 14, comprising the step of contacting the  
2 modified solution with the stain on the soft fabric article for at least five minutes to remove  
3 the stain.

4  
5           19. The method according to claim 14, comprising the step of contacting the  
6 modified solution with the stain on the soft fabric article for at least fifteen minutes to remove  
7 the stain.

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9           20. The method according to claim 14, wherein the alkali metal hydroxide is  
10 sodium hydroxide, and the hypochlorite salt is sodium hypochlorite.

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12           21. The method according to claim 20, wherein the modified solution comprises at  
13 least 0.5 weight percent of sodium hypochlorite.

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15           22. The method according to claim 20, wherein the modified solution comprises at  
16 least 1 weight percent of sodium hypochlorite.

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18           23. The method according to claim 20, wherein the modified solution comprises at  
19 least 2 weight percent of sodium hypochlorite.

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21           24. The method according to claim 20, wherein the modified solution comprises at  
22 least 5 weight percent of sodium hypochlorite.

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24           25. A kit useful for removing a stain from a soft fabric article, said kit  
25 comprising:

26           a cleaning composition which comprises an effective amount of a hypochlorite salt  
27 and an alkali metal hydroxide, the weight concentration ratio of the alkali metal hydroxide  
28 over the hypochlorite salt being no less than 1:12.5; and

29           an instruction for removing said stain from said soft fabric article employing said  
30 cleaning composition.

26. The kit according to claim 25, wherein the alkali metal hydroxide is sodium hydroxide, and the hypochlorite salt is sodium hypochlorite.

27. The kit according to claim 26, wherein the weight concentration ratio of sodium hydroxide over sodium hypochlorite is no less than 1:10.

28. The kit according to claim 26, wherein the weight concentration ratio of sodium hydroxide over sodium hypochlorite is no less than 1:5.

29. The kit according to claim 26, wherein the weight concentration ratio of sodium hydroxide over sodium hypochlorite is no less than 1:2.5.

30. The kit according to claim 26, wherein the weight concentration ratio of sodium hydroxide over sodium hypochlorite is no less than 1:1.

31. A kit useful for removing a stain from a soft fabric article, said kit comprising:  
a first compartment which includes a sodium hypochlorite solution;  
a second compartment which includes a sodium hydroxide solution; and  
an instruction for removing said stain from said soft fabric article employing said kit.